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**OFFICE OF PETITIONS**

In re Patent No. 5,697,970 :  
Issued: 16 December, 1997 :  
Application No. 08/650,783 : DECISION ON PETITION  
Filed: 20 May, 1996 :  
For: THINLY WOVEN FLEXIBLE :  
GRAFT :

This is a decision on the petition under 37 CFR 1.378(c),<sup>1</sup> filed on 3 March, 2006, to accept the unintentionally delayed payment of a maintenance fee for the above-identified patent.

The petition is GRANTED.

The patent issued on 16 December, 1997. The window for payment of the second maintenance fee installment with a surcharge closed on 16 December, 2005. Therefore, since this petition was filed within twenty-four (24) months of the six-month grace period provided in 37 CFR 1.362(e), this petition was timely filed under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.378(c).

Accordingly, the maintenance fee in this case is hereby accepted and the above-identified patent is hereby reinstated as of the mail date of this decision.

The file is being forwarded to Files Repository.

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<sup>1</sup> 37 CFR 1.378(c) provides that a petition to accept an unintentionally delayed payment of a maintenance fee must be filed within twentyfour months of the six-month grace period provided in § 1.362(e) and must include:

- (1) The required maintenance fee set forth in § 1.20(e) through (g);
- (2) The surcharge set forth in § 1.20(i)(2); and
- (3) A statement that the delay in payment of the maintenance fee was unintentional.

Patent No. 5,697,970

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Telephone inquiries related to this decision should be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3231.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "D Wood".

Douglas I. Wood  
Senior Petitions Attorney  
Office of Petitions